

Background on Maritime Civil Affairs Group (MCAG)

MISSION

The establishment of Maritime Civil Affairs Group (MCAG) is a result of the Chief of Naval Operations, Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) initiative. Its mission will be to conduct Civil Affairs activities and to support Civil/Military Operations. Civil Affairs activities enhance the relationship between military forces and civil authorities and involve the application of Civil Affairs Functional Specialty Skills in areas normally the responsibility of the civil government.

HISTORY

The Chief of Naval Operations Guidance for 2006 called for a "better joint, allied, and coalition interoperability" to "promote peace, stability, and other US interests." With the startup of Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) in January 2006 to support those aims, the need for a Maritime Civil Affairs presence, as an integral part of that effort, became increasingly evident. On March 27, 2006, OPNAVNOTE 3111 officially established MCAG.

One year later, on March 31, 2007, MCAG opened its doors at Building Annexes 3542 C & D, Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, Virginia.

During its planning phase and first steps, MCAG drew heavily on the U.S. Army's extensive Civil Affairs expertise. Published on April 11, 2007, the U.S. Navy Maritime Civil Affairs Concept of Operations (CONOPS) outlines the mission, vision, capabilities, and limitations that guide Maritime Civil Affairs (MCA). The CONOPS frames how MCA will now have the "ability to contribute to a broader range of geographically dispersed operations."

A natural fit with the Joint-Force concept, MCAG blends maritime-specific functional specialties with established Army and Marine Corps civil affairs missions. To avoid mission duplication, MCA leverages capabilities in which the Navy already excels: port operations, harbor and channel construction and maintenance, and marine and fisheries resources. The CONOPS asserts that this approach will "close current war-fighting gaps" and calls MCAG "one of the major cornerstones of NECC's efforts."

MCAG has two squadrons in Imperial Beach, CA and Yorktown, VA.